



RECOVERY PLANNING FOR EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Early Years and Prevention Service COVID-19

IN THIS ISSUE: 29TH MAY 2020

Recovery Planning

Yesterday afternoon the Prime Minister announced that the Government's five tests for easing the lockdown in England have been met, enabling all children to be welcomed back to early years settings and a phased return of some children to school, from Monday 1 June.

The welfare of children and staff has been at the heart of all decision making and Ministers want to thank all those involved, including local authorities, in preparing for this milestone.

The following materials available to support settings as they prepare to open for all children:

- the DfE Early Years planning guide is available [here](#);
- and a Foundation Years video podcast is available [here](#).

The Department for Education published guidance to support all early years and childcare settings with plans for wider opening. [Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June](#) A planning guide for early years providers, in England, to help prepare them to open their settings for all children from 1 June 2020.

You should read this planning guide alongside:

- [Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June](#)
- [Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)
- [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) coronavirus disapplications](#)
- [Supporting children and young people with SEND as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening](#)
- [Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#)

In light of the guidance published by the DfE, Slough Early Years and Prevention Service has developed a 'Recovery Action Planning Document' to support providers in Slough with preparation to reopen. The Quality, Care and Learning team are on hand to offer you information, advice and guidance and to help you navigate through the various guidance that has been issued. Please contact 01753 476554 / earlyyears@slough.gov.uk for further information.



Learning in the early years is crucial

Nursery and childcare settings make a significant contribution to a child's long-term wellbeing and development and they are working hard to be able to welcome more children back from 1 June at the earliest.



Supporting Learning

Settings should use reasonable endeavours to deliver the EYFS learning and development requirements as far as possible in the current circumstances, as set out in guidance on the temporary changes to the EYFS requirements in light of coronavirus.

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Building Confidence

What can early years and childcare providers do to support parental confidence to access early education following COVID-19?

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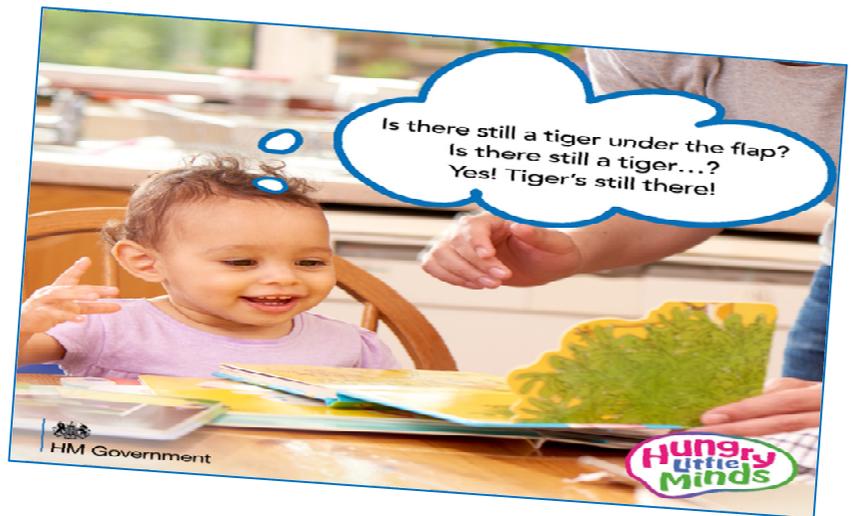
Supporting Learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that schools and childcare settings must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old.

The priorities at this time are helping young children to adapt to their new routines and supporting children to settle back into the setting, especially where there have been staffing changes. Continuing to support their early language and communication skills is essential. Children who have had limited opportunities for exercise should be encouraged to exert themselves physically.

Settings should use reasonable endeavours to deliver the EYFS learning and development requirements as far as possible in the current circumstances, as set out in guidance on the temporary changes to the EYFS requirements in light of coronavirus. This means continuing to provide an environment that invites learning across all 7 areas as far as is practicable during this time. Consider how stories, singing and games can be used to help children to socialise and resettle into familiar everyday routines.

Plan how children can learn in age-appropriate ways about how they can keep themselves safe, including regular handwashing and using tissues. Consider how to encourage children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.



Consider new approaches that will need to be taken to minimise the sharing of resources between groups, for example for painting, sticking, cutting and outdoor construction activities, which should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use by different groups. Malleable resources, such as play dough, should not be shared between groups and public health advice is that, as sand pits cannot be thoroughly cleaned between uses, they should not be used at this time. Consider how resources can be used safely and in which circumstances and which items it might be more practical to remove during this time.

Plan how outdoor space, where available, can be used as much as possible. Consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning, while ensuring outdoor equipment and toys are appropriately cleaned between being used by different

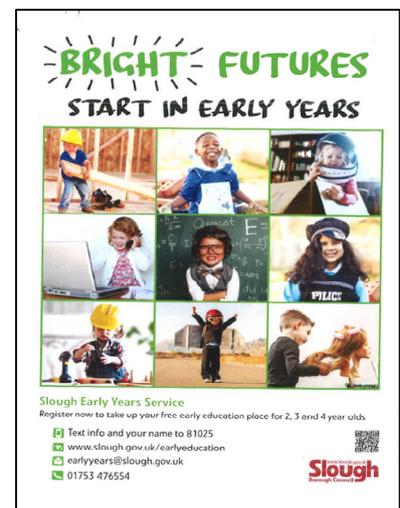
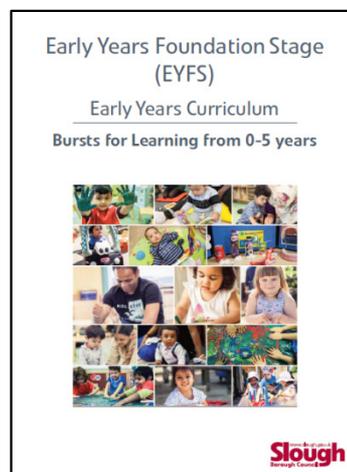
The Early Years sector has produced this guide [EYFS Bursts for Learning 0-5](#) with contributions from Children's Centres and Maintained Nursery schools to support children during the Covid-19 lockdown period and beyond. The guide offers a burst of teaching ideas to ensure continuity of the EYFS curriculum.

The DfE has produced: Advice for parents and carers of early years children who have not yet started school to [Help children aged 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

HUNGREY LITTLE MINDS

Improving early communication, language and literacy development is a key priority for the government and a cornerstone of building a country that works for everyone.

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>





Ask Michael

Service Lead Early Years and Prevention

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

What is the Early Years and Prevention Service doing to support the long term sustainability of Early Years and Childcare Provision in Slough?

We are working with a range of partners across the council and voluntary sector to ensure the latest updates are shared with early years and childcare providers. Our daily update emails have provided you with information to help support families during this unprecedented time including material from One Slough, safeguarding, health and well-being, bereavement support, family life during lockdown and much much more. We will continue to liaise with colleagues to ensure you are aware of the services available to you to support the children and families accessing your provision but also those who may choose to stay at home.

The Slough Early Years and Prevention Service is aware of the various different challenges that the sector is facing right now and will continue to face in the long term. We know that many parents and carers will be apprehensive about their child/ren returning to early years provision but we know that attending early education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and supports children's social and emotional development. These key messages need to be shared with parents sensitively along with the messages relating to scientific evidence regarding the spread of coronavirus in young children. We are therefore working with our Communications Team at Slough Borough Council to share these messages over the next few months via the media including Twitter and Facebook. We will be reminding parents about the benefits of accessing good early education and reminding them to apply for 2 year old funding and the extended entitlement before the 31st August. The Family Information Service will continue to support families who need help to find early years and childcare provision and we will continue to monitor the sufficiency of places. We appreciate your efforts in sharing your participation rates and vacancies with the service to support our sufficiency duty and our work with Slough Families.

For early years settings, the dedicated schools grant (DSG) should continue to be paid by local authorities for provision of free entitlements. Where parents are accessing hours beyond the free entitlements they are eligible for, early year providers should continue to charge parents in the normal way. We are working closely with DfE colleagues to look at the long term sustainability issues that the sector could face as a result of the pandemic and we have shared our thoughts regarding future funding arrangements. We are keen to provide you with more information about the funding decisions for the autumn term and as soon as the department publish these arrangements we will share them with you.

The wider business support packages can continue to be used as appropriate, including the loan schemes and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), on condition that the principles in Department for Education's sector specific guidance continue to be met.

We are continuing to work with the childcare sector to understand how the early years sector can best be supported to ensure that sufficient safe, appropriate and affordable childcare is available for those returning to work now, and for all families who need it in the longer term.



BUILDING CONFIDENCE

The latest decision to reopen early years and childcare provision is based on scientific advice. Young children are being prioritised in the first phases of wider opening, for several reasons. Firstly, because there is moderately high scientific confidence in evidence suggesting younger children are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus (COVID-19); and secondly because evidence shows the particularly detrimental impact which time spent out of education can have upon them.

Parents and carers will need to be confident that their child's early years and childcare provision is prepared, having systems and process in place to support the safety and well being of the children, parents and

staff. Sharing the settings procedures with families will be important to the settings long term sustainability plans and will ensure that parents are confident that risks have been minimalised. Let your families know that what works in one setting will not work in another and that this means that some providers will be able to welcome more children than others. Remind all families why early education is so important and how the first five years of a child's life are critical to their lifelong development. Positive early years experiences impact on a child's brain development, supporting their language, social and behavioural skills.



Key Messages to share with families:

- When settings re-open it will not be returning to normal.
 - This will be no easy task and requires a great deal of careful thinking.
 - The DfE has provided outline guidance and each setting will need to consider how this applies to their context/situation.
 - Coronavirus will not have gone away; a core principle of the education system is the safety and wellbeing of children and staff.
 - Strategies must dovetail with national strategy in fighting COVID-19 to reduce/minimise the rate of infection.
 - It is possible that there will not be a vaccine for 18 months or more – that means settings will need to build a strategy to manage the risk over an extended period.
 - Providers cannot stay closed interminably – a prolonged closure of settings will itself cause real harm to many children.
 - Children's experiences during lockdown will have varied massively.
 - It is likely that any strategy would need to incorporate measures that limit the chances of close contact – such as adjusting class sizes, and staggering breaktimes.
 - It will be difficult for younger children to observe full social distancing and no one should pretend otherwise. It is unrealistic to believe that providers will always be able to keep children two metres apart from each other
- straightforward but an engagement process that considers all perspectives will lead to the strongest plan and the one most likely to be widely supported and appreciated.
 - Changing scenarios will make any single plan unlikely to be the finished article. Settings along with the settings community need to be agile and flexible and adjust as they go through the period of recovery.
 - Recovery is an endurance event, not a sprint – the first steps are re-opening, but there are likely to be many other phases.
 - There needs to be an opportunity to celebrate contributions during the childcare phase – and the opportunity for staff and children to share and reflect.
 - For success, it will need wide consensus and deep reassurance among parents and staff. Any plan will need to accommodate a balance between meeting the needs of children, all parents (including those who may be trying to return to work) and all staff.
 - Attending early education lays the foundation for lifelong learning and supports children's social and emotional development.
 - There are many benefits to children getting a good start through free early education, and research has proven that those children who attend a good early years provision before starting school do better in their GCSE results than children who do not take up an early education place.

Sector Updates

Data collection

From Monday 1st June all providers that are open will be required to submit the following table with completed figures by 12pm on Monday's and Thursday's to earlyyears@slough.gov.uk. Please note we will **NOT** be requiring settings to submit Early Years registers every Friday from week beginning 1st June.

Attendance Totals – Children aged 0 – 4 years old only	
1) Total number of children who are attending your educational setting today 0 -4 years old	
2) Number of children with critical worker parents	
3) Children in need (CIN)	
4) Number of children with an Education , Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)	
5) Number of children who are both CIN and have an EHC Plan	
6) Number of children assessed as vulnerable by providers or local authorities but not CIN and without an EHC Plan	
7) How many 2 year old children attending your setting today are in receipt of their funding entitlement	
8) How many 3 & 4 year old children attending your setting today are in receipt of their universal funding entitlement	
9) How many 3 & 4 year old children attending your setting today are in receipt of their extended funding entitlement	

Attendance Totals – Children aged 5 years and over only	
1) Total number of children who are attending your educational setting today 5 years and over	
2) Number of children with critical worker parents	
3) Children in need (CIN)	
4) Number of children with an Education , Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)	
5) Number of children who are both CIN and have an EHC Plan	
6) Number of children assessed as vulnerable by providers or local authorities but not CIN and without an EHC Plan	

Launch of the NHS Test and Trace service

The new NHS Test and Trace service has launched today and will form a central part of the government's coronavirus recovery strategy. Anyone who tests positive for coronavirus will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will need to share information about their recent interactions. People identified as having been in close contact with someone who has a positive test must stay at home for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms, to stop unknowingly spreading the virus.

- Further information on the NHS Test and Trace service can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-nhs-test-and-trace-service>
- Guidance on the NHS Test and Trace service for employers, businesses and workers can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance>
- Guidance on how the NHS Test and Trace works can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>
- Public Health England has published guidance that explains what you should do if the NHS Test and Trace service notifies you that you are a contact of a person who has tested positive for coronavirus and you do not live with that person. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

Early years inclusion grant

The early years inclusion grant is available to support the inclusion of children aged 2, 3 & 4 years old with low level / emerging special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) who attend registered early years provision.

In the current climate it may be a good time to think about applying for a grant to support those children returning to the setting.

The grant could be used to apply for the following:

- Specific resources or equipment
- Funding for targeted or bespoke training on specific issues or conditions
- Short term funding for additional capacity to support the inclusion for a specific child or groups of children which will enable the setting to be fully inclusive - where all other options have been tried/explored
- Support for transition arrangements, the grant is not intended to be used for children who require long term one to one adult support

To access the application form and for more information please follow the link below:

<https://thelink.slough.gov.uk/la-services/early-years-and-development/early-years-inclusion>

Local Government Association

The Local Government Association is pleased to confirm that as of Monday 1 June, community centres, and places of worship, will be allowed to open for providers on the Early Years Register which usually use those premises to deliver formal childcare – the relevant regulations are being amended to clarify this position..

SLOUGH EARLY YEARS AND PREVENTION SERVICE: TELEPHONE: 01753 476554 / EMAIL: earlyyears@slough.gov.uk